

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 324-6962



August 26, 1986

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 86-82

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY GAIN COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: GAIN POLICY GUIDELINES ON REMEDIATION SCREENING TESTS

As you know, the law (Welfare and Institutions Code Section 11320.5(b)(6)) and regulations (Manual of Policies and Procedures Section 42-772.5) governing the GAIN program provide that for those participants who lack basic literacy or math skills, a high school diploma or its equivalent, or English language skills, the basic participant contract must provide for, and the county welfare department must make appropriate referrals of participants to, either remedial education, or instruction in order to obtain a general educational development (GED) certificate, or instruction in English-as-a-second language (ESL). For purposes of this notice, further references which are applicable to all three of these categories of education will be consolidated under the single term "remediation".

GAIN regulations (MPP Section 42-761.161) further require that these appropriate referrals to remediation be based on screening tests provided by the State Department of Social Services (SDSS). This notice provides policy guidelines regarding administration and interpretation of the required screening tests.

BACKGROUND:

As indicated in previous notices, SDSS has executed an interagency agreement with the State Department of Education (SDE) to have the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) develop testing instruments to screen GAIN registrants to determine if remediation is required. As a division of the San Diego Community College Foundation, CASAS is nationally recognized as a leader in the field of preemployment skills measurement and testing. The screening tests CASAS has developed have been labeled the GAIN Appraisal Program. The copyrighted tests include the following:

1. Basic Reading Test - measures specific reading competencies which include a person's ability to apply basic reading skills in a job setting or in preemployment training;

2. Basic Math Test - measures specific basic math computation skills which indicate a person's ability to apply basic math skills in a job setting or in preemployment training; and
3. Listening Test - designed for persons with limited English proficiency, indicates a person's level of listening comprehension for basic skills such as following directions.

TESTING ADMINISTRATION/INTERPRETATION

The screening test must be given to all non-deferred participants except those who clearly do not speak English or those who are in a CWD approved self-initiated training or education program. Participants who are determined to be non-English speaking will not be tested by the CWD and the basic participant contract would provide for referral to an ESL provider for evaluation and development of an appropriate educational program. The CWD would obtain from the provider the results of the evaluation and the recommended program designed to achieve basic ESL skills which would allow the participant to function in a job setting or in preemployment training. Recognizing that there is a considerable range for what is considered "basic ESL skills", we are working with SDE and others to develop more specific guidelines as to the appropriate goals for ESL instruction under the GAIN program.

The Listening Test will be given only to those participants with limited ability to speak English who may have difficulty understanding verbal communication in English, as determined by the person conducting the appraisal. It would be expected that there would be minimal use of this test. The participants with limited English proficiency who take the Listening Test would take the Basic Reading and Basic Math Tests only if they demonstrate that they have basic listening comprehension skills by attaining a score of 215 or above on the Listening Test. If a person with limited English proficiency scores below 215, it indicates that he/she does not have basic listening comprehension skills; no further screening tests will be administered and the person will be referred to an ESL provider in the same manner outlined above for the non-English speaking participant. Participants who speak and understand English will not be given the Listening Test. These participants will be given only the Basic Reading and Basic Math Tests.

The tests are scored separately and referrals to remediation depend on the scores on each test and, in some cases, whether or not the participant has a high school diploma or equivalent. The following chart illustrates Basic Reading and Basic Math test score interpretations and the appropriate referrals based on the various possible scores and educational history of the participant. The chart also indicates the approximate length of instruction that can be expected.

<u>SCORE ATTAINED</u>	<u>COMPETENCY LEVEL/APPROPRIATE REFERRAL/ EXPECTED DURATION</u>
Reading: 225 or above Math: 225 or above	Indicates participant is functioning at or above GED/high school level. Participants with a high school diploma or equivalent will not be referred for remediation. Refer those lacking diploma/equivalent for instruction to obtain GED. Expected duration of instruction would be approximately one to three months.
Reading: 215 - 224 Math: 215 - 224	Indicates participant has basic skills in both math and reading. Participants with a high school diploma or equivalent will not be referred for remediation. Refer those lacking a high school diploma or equivalent for instruction to obtain a GED. Expected duration of instruction would be approximately six to 12 months. For those who score closer to 225, instruction would be expected to be shorter than for those who score closer to 215.
Reading: 200 - 214 Math: 200 - 214	Indicates participant lacks basic skills in both math and reading, and appears to be capable of achieving a basic competency level. Refer participant (whether or not he/she has diploma or equivalent) for remedial education to achieve basic competency level in both areas. Expected duration of instruction would be approximately six to 12 months.
Reading: 225 or above Math: 215 - 224 or Reading: 215 - 224 Math: 225 or above	Indicates participant is functioning at or above GED/high school level in one area and has basic skills in the other area. Participants with a high school diploma or equivalent will not be referred for remediation. Refer those lacking diploma or equivalent for instruction to obtain GED. Expected duration of instruction would be approximately four to six months.

Reading: 225 or above
 Math: 200 - 214
 or
 Reading: 200 - 214
 Math: 225 or above

Indicates participant is functioning at or above GED/high school level in one area, but lacks basic skills in the other area, and is capable of achieving a basic competency in that area. Refer participant (whether or not he/she has diploma or equivalent) for remedial education to achieve basic competency level in the area where the score was 200-214. Expected duration of instruction would be approximately six to 12 months.

Reading: 215 - 224
 Math: 200 - 214
 or
 Reading: 200 - 214
 Math: 215 - 224

Indicates participant has basic skills in one area but lacks basic skills in the other area, and is capable of achieving a basic competency level in that area. Refer participant (whether or not he/she has diploma or equivalent) for remedial education to achieve basic competency level in the area where the score was 200 - 214. Expected duration of instruction would be approximately six to 12 months.

Reading: 200 - 214
 Math: Below 200

Indicates participant lacks basic reading skills, but is capable of achieving a basic competency level in reading. Refer participant (whether or not he/she has diploma or equivalent) for remedial education to achieve basic competency level in reading. Expected duration of instruction would be approximately 9 - 12 months.

Reading: Below 200
 Math: 200 - 214
 or
 Reading: Below 200
 Math: Below 200

Scores are below accurate range of screening tests. Further diagnosis needed by the educational provider to develop case-by-case determination of appropriate educational plan. Severely learning disabled individuals may qualify for exemption from GAIN participation.

Participants who do not successfully complete their approved self-initiated training or education program would be tested and referred for appropriate education according to the guidelines described above.

Participants who successfully complete their approved self-initiated programs (or who reach the two-year limit of self-initiated programs) would not be tested according to the above guidelines before continuing on with the GAIN program. However,

when a participant reaches the assessment component, an appropriate remedial education program would be required as part of the employment plan if the results of the assessment indicate a need for remedial education.

Enclosed with this letter is the GAIN Appraisal Program Instruction Manual reprinted with the permission of CASAS. The manual outlines test administration procedures, describes the tests and their contents and gives instructions for scoring the tests. Counties which have not yet implemented GAIN, but wish to review the actual test booklets may make arrangements to do so through SDSS. In addition, under the terms of their contract, CASAS will hold four regional workshops to train persons who will be administering the screening tests. We will notify you of the dates and locations of the workshops.

The screening test procedures are such that after attending the workshops, county staff without experience in test administration will be able to give the test. However, some counties have indicated a preference to use staff from county schools or local educational agencies, or other individuals who are not county welfare department employees to act as test proctors. While the rest of the activities associated with the initial GAIN appraisal may not be contracted out, it is allowable for CWD's to contract out for the screening test administration. Development of the basic participant contract based on the test results must be done by the CWD.

We understand and appreciate the concerns that have been expressed by counties regarding the process of screening GAIN participants for remediation needs. As indicated at recent CWDA meetings, we will closely monitor this area. A number of the initial counties implementing GAIN, as well as some volunteer counties which have not yet implemented GAIN, are already involved in an evaluation of the screening tests. Based on results from tests given to approximately 5,000 GAIN or WIN Demo registrants, CASAS will, in conjunction with SDSS, SDE and the counties, evaluate the test administration process and propose any necessary modifications to the process. We are fully aware of the need to balance administrative feasibility with the need for reliable, valid test results that lead to appropriate referrals for remediation of GAIN participants.

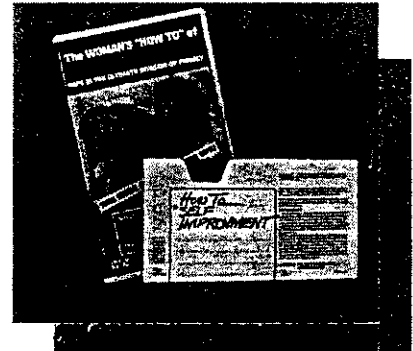
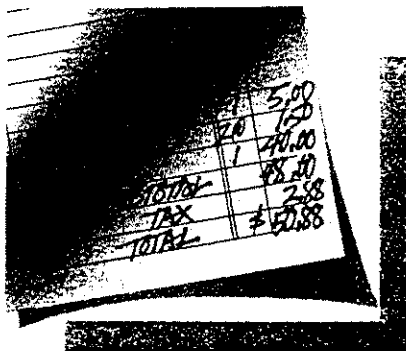
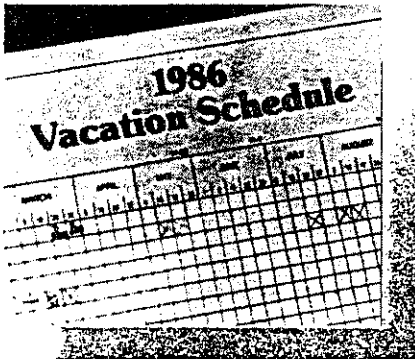
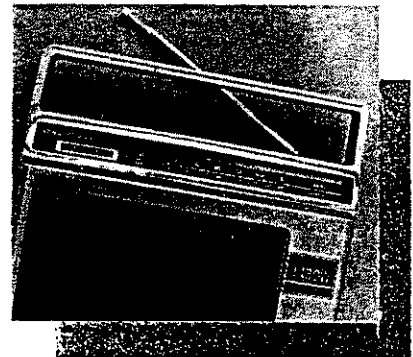
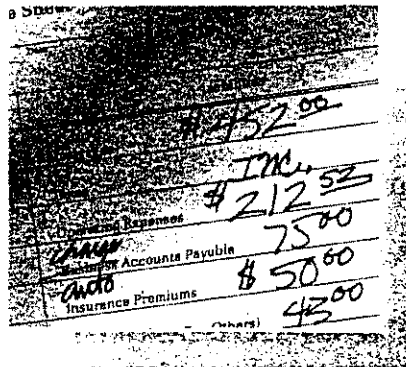
Please direct any questions regarding this letter to the GAIN Implementation Bureau at (916) 324-6962.

Bruce Wapstaff
 for CARL B. WILLIAMS
 Deputy Director
 Employment and Community
 Services Division

Attachment

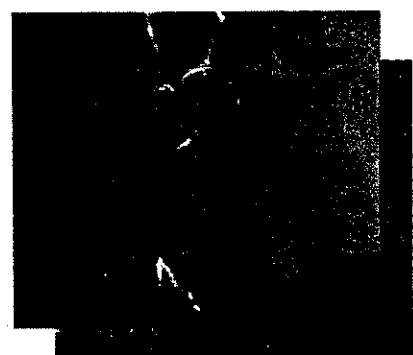
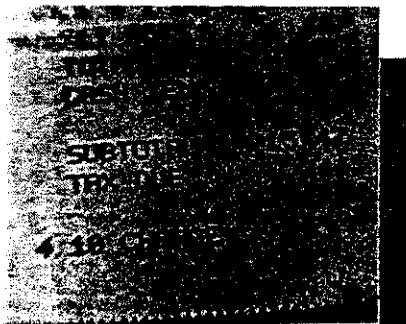
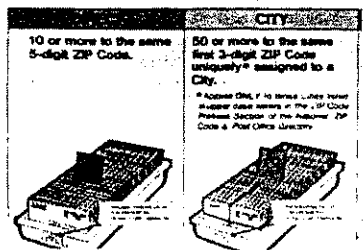
GAIN Appraisal Program

Instruction MANUAL



HOW TO PREPARE PRESORTED FI

Pieces qualifying for the Presort rate MUST be prepared as follows:



GAIN APPRAISAL PROGRAM

The GAIN Appraisal Program was developed by the California Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), a division of the San Diego Community College Foundation, Inc. through a contract administered by the California Department of Education and the California Department of Social Services. Authorization of state funds were from Chapter 1025, Statutes of 1985. All materials are copyrighted by the San Diego Community College Foundation, Inc. (CASAS). All rights are reserved. This manual may not be reproduced or transmitted without written permission.

PART I

INTRODUCTION

This manual provides information concerning the administration of GAIN Appraisal Program Tests. Three tests are included in this program, and are designed to provide the initial screening information in the areas of Listening Comprehension, Basic Reading Comprehension and Basic Math. All three tests were developed by the California Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS).

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Description of the Tests

The CASAS Listening Test assesses a person's level of listening comprehension of functional skills such as following directions. It is designed for persons of limited English proficiency. The 12-item test can be group or individually administered, and must be administered with the cassette tape provided with each manual. A 'Test Content Table' is included in this manual on page 14 identifying each specific listening competency measured.

The CASAS Basic Reading Test assesses a person's ability to apply basic reading skills in a functional context. Each item in the test measures a specific reading competency. A 'Test Content Table' is included in this manual on page 14 identifying each specific reading competency measured.

The CASAS Basic Math Test assesses a person's ability to perform basic math computation and also apply basic math skills in a functional context. Each item on the test measures a specific math skill. A 'Test Content Table' is included in this manual on page 14 identifying each math competency measured.

Time Allowances

The following chart indicates the time allowed for each test.

<u>TEST</u>	<u>TOTAL ITEMS</u>	<u>TEST IN MINUTES</u>
Listening	12	15
Basic Reading	30	30
Basic Math	20	20

Encourage examinees not to spend much time on any one test item.

Scoring Keys and Reports

Scoring keys and raw-to-scale score conversion charts are provided for each test. Each test scale contains suggested scale score reference points for referral to educational programs.

PART II

Materials Needed for Testing

- A. Test Booklets (One for each person being tested)
- B. Pencils (#2 pencils for 'scannable' answer sheets)
- C. Answer Sheets (Note: there are two separate answer sheets
1. Basic Reading/Basic Math
2. Listening)
- D. Clock (A large wall clock is recommended, so all persons can monitor time.)
- E. Scratch Paper for each person
- F. Cassette tape and good cassette player (Listening Test only. For individual test administration, headphones are recommended.)

Test Administration

Using normal intake procedures, determine through oral interview and review of written forms if the person is having difficulty with speaking, listening or writing skills.

- A. Persons who function minimally, if at all, in English and are not able to communicate basic personal information should not be tested. They should be referred for English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) instruction.
- B. Persons with limited English proficiency who have difficulty communicating with the interviewer should be given the Listening Test first. Listening Test Administration instructions begin on Page 8.
- C. All others should begin with the Basic Reading Test.

Reading and Math Tests

- 1. Arrange for a quiet testing area and stress the importance of silence to persons taking the test.
- 2. Distribute the answer sheets, pencils and scratch paper. Complete name and date, and demographic information. Check to make sure all persons have filled out the information correctly.
- 3. Distribute numbered test booklets and provide scratch paper. Instruct persons not to open test booklets until told to do so. Instruct persons not to write in the test booklets.
- 4. Open the test booklets to the Reading Test. Read the general test directions aloud and do the sample questions together. Make sure every person understands how to mark the answer sheet. Be sure each person understands that it is a 30-minute timed test, and that not much time should be spent on any one question. If a person finishes the Reading Test before the time limit, they may review their answers on the Reading Test, but are not to begin the Math test.
- 5. Be certain that all persons understand all directions before beginning the test.
- 6. Tell everyone to do the best they can.
- 7. Begin the Reading Test. Proctor the test to make sure that everyone is working independently and following directions.
- 8. After 30 minutes, call time. Instruct everyone to stop and put their pencils down.
- 9. Have persons open booklets to the Math Test. Review general directions aloud and do the sample questions together. Remind everyone to use scratch paper and not to mark in the test booklet. Indicate that this test has 20 questions and the time limit is 20 minutes.

10. Begin the Math Test. Make sure that each person is working independently and following directions.
11. After 20 minutes, call time. Instruct everyone to stop and put their pencils down.

Collecting Test Materials

As persons finish the test, have them review their answer sheets to make sure that their marks are dark and solid. If they change their answers, make sure that the old marks are completely erased.

At the end of the Math Test, collect the test booklets, answer sheets and all scratch paper. Count the tests, answer sheets and scratch paper. Make sure all materials are returned. Check the test booklets to make sure they have no pencil marks in them.

Scoring Tests

Remove the Test Security Perforations and Glue-Dots from the Top, Bottom and Right-Hand Side of the Answer Sheet. Leave the Left-Hand Side attached.

Turn to Page 2 of the 3-part Answer Sheet. Score the Reading Test and the Math Test separately.

Count the number of correct answers (the number of 'filled-in' circles) for the Reading Test. Write this number in the box labelled 'Reading Raw Score'.

Using the Reading Conversion Table on the same page, locate the Raw Score. Read across to the next column labelled 'Scale Score'. Write this Scale Score number in the box labelled 'Reading Scale Score'.

Count the number of correct answers (the number of 'filled-in' circles) for the Math Test. Write this number in the box labelled 'Math Raw Score'.

Using the Math Conversion Table on the same page, locate the Raw Score. Read across to the next column labelled 'Scale Score'. Write this Scale Score number in the box labelled 'Math Scale Score'.

Answer Sheet Security

Answer Sheets must remain secure. They are individually numbered and secured on all four sides. Be sure that Answer Sheets are not separated until after the test has been completed and the tests are in your possession.

It is important that the person tested does not retain the answer sheet, in whole or in part. Check the answer sheet numbers. Be sure you get back as many answer sheets as you hand out.

Separation and Routing of Answer Sheets

After Scoring, separate the three pages of the answer sheet, as follows:

Turn to Page Two. You will find a vertical perforation just to the right of the answer column, 2 inches in from the left hand side of the page. Tear and remove Page Two at this perforation line.

Turn to Page Three. You will find a vertical perforation just to the right of the answer column, 2 inches in from the left hand side of the page. Tear and remove Page Three at this perforation line.

Route the separated answer sheet as follows:

Part One Keep separately, and return to the State Department of Education for Machine Scoring. Mail, in the pre-addressed envelopes provided, at the end of every month to:

GAIN
P.O. Box 80488
San Diego, CA 92138

Please note that Part One will have the Part Two and Part Three Answer columns attached.

It is recommended that these Answer Sheet original pages be filed separately and securely at a single location, prior to mailing monthly in the envelopes provided.

Part Two Keep in local client files.

Part Three For future use. Keep in local client files. Do not give to the person tested. If the person is referred for education and training, attach Part Three to the forwarding paperwork to the Training Agency.

Listening Test Administration

1. If this test is individually administered, a set of headphones is recommended.
2. The test must be administered using the cassette tape included in the test administration packet. Be sure that you have another copy of the tape available in case of tape malfunction. Two copies of the tape are provided with the test administration packet.
3. Be sure each person can hear the tape at a comfortable level.
4. The test examiner must listen to the tape before administering the test for the first time, in order to be familiar with the test content. (A complete script of this test is located in this manual on Page 11.)
5. Be sure that all persons understand all directions before beginning the test.
6. All test directions are included on the cassette tape.
7. All persons tested listen to the test with the test booklet open and the answer sheet available. They follow the directions on the tape while referring to the booklet, and marking down their answers on the Answer Sheet.
8. The person is not required to read in order to choose the correct answers on Part I of the Listening Test. Parts II and III of this test do require some literacy.
9. Arrange for a quiet testing area and stress the importance of silence to persons taking the test.
10. Distribute answer sheets and pencils. Complete name and date, and demographic information. Check to make sure all persons have filled out the information correctly. Explain the importance of making heavy black marks.

11. Distribute numbered test booklets. Instruct persons not to write in test booklets.
12. Explain the importance of working independently.
13. Tell everyone to do the best they can.
14. Each of the three test sections begins with one practice item. Each practice item is numbered and included on the Answer Sheet. Practice items should be filled in on the Answer Sheet.
15. Start the cassette tape. Do not stop the tape before the end of the 14-minute test. Do not rewind and replay any part of the test.
16. Proctor the test to make sure that everyone is working independently and following instructions.
17. When the test is over, stop the tape. Collect the Test Booklets and Answer sheets.

Collecting Listening Test Materials

After persons finish the test, have them review their answer sheets to make sure that their marks are dark and solid. If they change their answers, make sure that the old marks are completely erased.

At the end of the Listening Test, collect all test booklets and answer sheets. Count the tests and answer sheets and make sure all materials are returned. Please check the test booklets to make sure they have no pencil marks in them.

Scoring Listening Tests

Remove the Security Perforations and Glue-Dots from the Top, Bottom and Right-Hand Side of the Student Answer Sheet. Leave the Left-Hand Side attached.

Turn to Page 2 of the 3-part Answer Sheet.

Count the number of correct answers (the number of 'filled-in' circles) for the Listening Test. Write this number in the box labelled 'Listening Raw Score'.

Using the Conversion Table on the same page, locate the Raw Score. Read across to the next column labelled 'Scale Score'. Write this Scale Score number in the box labelled 'Listening Scale Score'.

Listening Test Answer Sheet Security

Answer Sheets must remain secure. They are individually numbered and secured on all four sides. Be sure that Answer Sheets are not separated until after the test has been completed and the tests are in your possession.

It is important that the person tested does not retain the answer sheet, in whole or in part. Check the answer sheet numbers. Be sure you get back as many answer sheets as you hand out.

Separation and Routing of Listening Test Answer Sheets

Instructions for separation and routing of Listening Test Answer Sheets are exactly the same as for the Reading Test/Math Test Answer sheets.

Refer to Page 7 for instructions.

Test Content Table

LISTENING

- Follow directions related to location.
- Follow directions related to safe work procedures.
- Interpret conversations about job applications, letters of reference, and job opportunities.
- Interpret information about safe work procedures, wages, benefits, and work related tasks.

Test Content Table

READING

- Interpret job applications and resumes.
- Use tables of contents.
- Interpret governmental forms related to seeking work such as applications for Social Security.
- Identify and use information about training opportunities such as job descriptions and job ads.
- Interpret work safety manuals and related publications.
- Identify procedures for reporting job-related hazards, accidents, injuries, and damages.
- Identify appropriate skills and education for keeping a job and getting a promotion.
- Interpret information about employee organizations.
- Recognize standards of behavior for interviews and select appropriate questions and responses during job interviews.
- Interpret employee handbooks.
- Interpret tax information from articles and publication.

Test Content Table

MATH

- Add whole numbers.
- Subtract whole numbers.
- Multiply whole numbers.
- Divide whole numbers.
- Add common or mixed fractions.
- Subtract common or mixed fractions.
- Compute sales tax.
- Compute, or interpret appropriate standard measurement for perimeter, height and weight.
- Interpret and compute wages and wage information.
- Use catalogs, order forms and related information to purchase goods and services.
- Interpret information about personal and family budgets.
- Interpret appropriate standard measurement for weight and volume.